

Message Text

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CINCPAC

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 MANILA 12581

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SUBJECT: WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS - AUGUST 13 TO 19, 1976

I. PSYCHOLOGICAL

1. LOW PAY AND DOG BITES - LOCAL REPORTAGE ON US BASES WAS MORE SPECIFIC THAN GENERAL THIS WEEK, WITH A SPATE OF ATTACKS ON THE BASES AS BAD EMPLOYERS AND BAD NEIGHBORS, REPLACING THE BROAD "SCRAP THE BASES" RHETORIC APPEARING LAST WEEK.

A CALL BY THE FILIPINO CIVILIAN EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATIONS FOR ABORGATION OF THE BASE LABOR AGREEMENT AS "DEFECTIVE AND DISADVANTAGEOUS TO THE FILIPINO WORKER" WAS BANNERED IN THE TIMES JOURNAL FOR THREE DAYS RUNNING AND ECHOED UP AND DOWN THE COLUMNS.

THE HEADLINES TELL THE STORY:

ON SATURDAY: "SCRAP BASES LABOR PACT, WORKERS SAY"

ON SUNDAY: "US BASE OFFICIALS IGNORE RP LABOR LAWS, DECREES"

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ON MONDAY: "RP WORKERS IN US BASES LOWEST PAID IN ASIA"

WHILE THE WORKERS' UNION, WITH THE BACKING OF A PROVINCIAL GOVERNOR AND A CITY MAYOR IN THE REGIONS SURROUNDING SUBIC AND CLARK CITED A BROAD RANGE OF ISSUES CONCERNING EMPLOYMENT, IT WAS THE MORE VOLATILE ISSUE OF LOW PAY THAT THE COLUMNISTS PICKED UP.

ERNESTO GRANADA OF THE TIMES JOURNAL OPINED:

"FILIPINOS ARE THE LOWEST PAID OF ALL US BASES WORKERS...

"JAPANESE WORKERS GET \$300 AMONTH; KOREANS, \$200; WHILE THE FILIPINOS GET ONLY \$65.

"THE DEFENSE OF DEMOCRACY IS SUPPOSED TO BE THE EQUAL TASK OF ALL FREE ASIANS. BUT IT SEEMS THAT FILIPINOS ARE LESS EQUAL THAN OTHERS.

"...FOR THE US GOVERNMENT AS REPRESENTED HERE BY ITS EMBASSY AND MILITARY AUTHORITIES IS NOT THAT BENEVOLENT--OR EVEN MERELY JUST. AMBASSADOR WILLIAM SULLIVAN HAS NO PARTICULAR LOVE FOR THE FILIPINOS."

TEODORO VALENCIA, IN TYPICALLY SARCASTIC VEIN, WROTE IN THE DAILY EXPRESS:

"FILIPINO LABOR GETS THE CHEAPEST PAY AND THE LEAST BENEFITS OF ALL ASIAN LABORERS IN US MILITARY BASES. THAT'S UNDERSTANDABLE. WE'RE FRIENDS AND ALLIES OF THE UNITED STATES. THE OTHER ASIANS ARE NOT."

HOWEVER, IN ITS LEAD EDITORIAL ON THE SUBJECT, THE TIMES JOURNAL PRESENTED A MORE TEMPERATE VIEW, CONCLUDING:

"IF, AFTER A CAREFUL REVIEW, THE RP PANELISTS CONCLUDE THAT THE BASE WORKERS' CLAIMS ARE INDEED MERITORIOUS, THEY WOULD DO WELL TO ASK THAT THE LABOR AGREEMENT BE RESCINDED AND REPLACED BY A PROVISION IN THE RENEGOTIATED TREATY THAT WOULD CLEARLY PROTECT THEIR RIGHTS. THIS IS NOW THE OPPORTUNE TIME TO MAKE ADJUSTMENTS THAT WOULD ASSURE HARMONIOUS LABOR RELATIONS BETWEEN THE AMERICAN BASE EMPLOYERS AND THEIR FILIPINO WORKERS."

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TIONS BETWEEN THE AMERICAN BASE EMPLOYERS AND THEIR FILIPINO WORKERS."

THE BASE LABOR STORIES WERE COUNTERPOINTED BY REHASHES OF VARIOUS PAST VEXATIONS OF A MORE SPECTACULAR VEIN. THE BASES WERE PILLORIED FOR USING DOGS TO MUTILATE TRESPASSERS, WHO HAD BEEN "ENTICED" BY AIRMEN TO ENTER THE BASE; FOR REFUSING TO ARREST A NAVAL OFFICER CHARGED WITH ORDERING THE BODY

SEARCH OF 25 FEMALE EMPLOYEES DESPITE A PHILIPPINE COURT WARRANT (LATER WITHDRAWN); FOR CAUSING NOISE POLLUTION OVER NEARBY VILLAGES; FOR BRINGING DRUGS AND POT TO TOWN; AND FOR OFF-BASE SEARCH AND SEIZURE OF GOODS FROM A FILIPINA BELIEVED TO BE BLACKMARKETERRING (THE LATTER A REASONABLY CURRENT EVENT).

SINCE MOST OF THE STORIES ORIGINATE WITH LOCAL PAID-BY-THE-LINE STRINGERS, WE ARE NO PRESENTLY DISPOSED TO VIEW THE LATTER STORIES AS PART OF CAMPAIGN, BUT MORE AS AN ATTEMPT BY THESE NEWSMEN TO CAPITALIZE ON A FAVORABLE MARKET FOR THEIR SENSATIONAL PRODUCTS.

2. THE NURSES AS VICTIMS OF RACISM - THE DRIVE TO BUILD UP A DEFENSE FUND FOR THE TWO FILIPINO NURSES ACCUSED OF MURDER IN DETROIT GAVE THE COLUMNISTS AND EDITORIAL WRITERS THE OPPORTUNITY TO RENEW THEIR CAMPAIGN AGAINST ANTI-FILIPINO PREJUDICE IN THE US. MOST PAPERS DID NOT OVERPLAY THE ISSUE THIS WEEK, BUT KERIMA POLOTAN'S FAR-LEFT EVENING POST EDITORIALIZED: "IS THERE A SECRET DRIVE IN THE UNITED STATES TO SMEAR THE FILIPINO NURSE AND FILIPINO PHYSICIAN TO UNDERMINE THEIR FAVORABLE IMAGE AMONG HOSPITAL ADMINISTRATORS AND THE AMERICAN PUBLIC? COULD THIS CAMPAIGN NOT HAVE ITS ROOTS IN THE UNEMPLOYMENT CRISIS BESETTING THE UNITED STATES?

"...IT IS PLAIN THAT BOTH FILIPINO RACIAL HONOR AND NATIONAL INTERESTS ARE AT STAKE IN THE CASE OF THE TWO NURSES."

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ERNESTO GRANADA IN HIS TIMES JOURNAL COLUMN ADDED THAT THE SENSATIONAL COVERAGE ACCORDED THE CASE HAS "GIVEN THE FILIPINO THE IMAGE OF A MASS MURDERER."

3. WHAT IS NON-ALIGNED? - THE NON-ALIGNED SUMMIT CONFERENCE RECEIVED ONLY MODERATE FRONT-PAGE TREATMENT THROUGHOUT THE WEEK, WITH MOST REPORTAGE AND COMMENTARY REGRETTING THE PHILIPPINES' RELEGATION TO "GUEST STATUS". SOMEWHAT SURPRISINGLY, HOWEVER, THE CHARGE THAT THE US BASES COMPROMISED THE PHILIPPINES' POSITION WAS BALANCED IF NOT OUTWEIGHED BY THE FILIPINOS' IRE AT THE PRIVILEGED POSITION ACCORDED THE COMMUNIST STATES.

ON THE ISSUE OF FORMING A THIRD WORLD NEWS AGENCY, BULLETIN TODAY COLUMNIST JESUS BIGORNIA EXPRESSED A REFRESHING RECOMMITMENT TO A FREE PRESS:

"WHILE THE CONCEPT OF A THIRD WORLD NEWSPOOL IS BASICALLY APPEALING, IT IS REplete WITH SERIOUS PROBLEMS AND DIRE POSSIBILITIES. IT COULD GENERATE (SIC) INTO A MUTUAL ADMIRATION PRESS EXCHANGE AMONG NON-ALIGNED NATIONS. IT MIGHT ALSO BECOME A TARGET FOR CONTROL BY THE MORE RADICAL

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MEMBERS OF THE GROUP SUCH AS CUBA, VIETNAM, NORTH KOREA AND LIBYA. TO ACHIEVE CONTROL OF THE PROJECTED "NEWSPOOL", RADICAL PARTICIPANTS IN THE ON-GOING CONFERENCE MAY ATTEMPT TO INSERT THEIR OWN PERSONNEL IN INFLUENTIAL AND CONTROLLING POSITIONS, TRY TO OPEN THE NEWSPOOL BRANCHES IN THEIR OWN CAPITALS WHERE THEY HAVE COMPLETE CONTROL OF COMMUNICATIONS, OR BE THE MOST ACTIVE IN PROVIDING PRESS MATERIAL OF THEIR CHOOSING AND CREATION."

II. SIGNIFICANT ACTIVITIES

1. STRASMA GOES OVER - PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT OF THE WEEK WAS VOLSPKR DR JOHN STRASMA, PROFESSOR OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS AT UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN. STRASMA SPOKE BEFORE GROUP OF 30 OFFICIALS OF GOP BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS AUGUST 12. THE FOLLOWING DAY, DR STRASMA MET IN A DAY-LONG SESSION HOSTED BY THE AGRARIAN REFORM INSTITUTE (ARI) AT THE UNIV. OF THE PHILIPPINES LOS BANOS CAMPUS. HIS AUDIENCE THERE INCLUDED OVER 50 OFFICERS AND STAFF OF ARI AND RELATED OFFICES. STRASMA'S BASIC TALK ON BOTH OCCASIONS DREW HEAVILY ON HIS MANY YEARS OF EXPERIENCE WITH LAND REFORM PROGRAMS IN SOUTH AMERICA. STRASMA WAS NOT ONLY A CAPABLE LECTURER, BUT VERY PERSONABLE

AS WELL, AND HIS PROGRAMS WERE BOTH WORTHWHILE AND EFFECTIVE.

2. "LIFE LIBERTY AND THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS." - AFTER
NEARLY SIX WEEKS OF COMPLICATIONS (AND DESPITE AN HOUR-LONG
BLACKOUT AND TORRENTIAL RAIN JUST PRIOR TO OPENING) USIS CEBU'S
BICENTENNIAL EXHIBIT OPENED WITH COCKTAILS ON MONDAY.
CEBU CITY MAYOR AND MRS EULOGIO BORRES ASSISTED BY THE WIRE
OF THE PRINCIPAL OFFICER, CUT THE RIBBON OPENING THE EXHIBIT.
APPROXIMATELY 100 INVITEES ATTENDED THE OPENING, MOST OF THEM
FROM OUR PRIMARY AUDIENCE. COMMENTS FROM THOSE ATTENDING WERE
UNIFORMLY POSITIVE, WITH MANY PEOPLE INDICATING THEIR PLANS
TO RETURN TO TAKE A SECOND LOOK (MANY ALREADY HAVE).

COLUMNIST PEARY ALEONAR - WHO RUSHED TO HIS TYPEWRITER IMMEDIATE-
LY FOLLOWING THE EXHIBIT - WROTE IN THE FREEMAN: "THE CONSENSUS
IS CLEAR AND DEFINITE: THE USIS EXHIBIT ON THE AMERICAN BICEN-
TENNIAL OBSERVANCE, "LIFE, LIBERTY AND THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS,"
AT THE LINCOLN CULTURAL CENTER...IS TERRIFIC. DON'T MISS IT."
THE EXHIBIT WILL RUN THROUGH SEPTEMBER 1, AND REGULARLY-SCHEDULED
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PROGRAMS HAVE BEEN SUSPENDED FOR THIS PERIOD.
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